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corner of the room. Such are some of the results and advantages of a complex scheme of treatment; and so far from cutting up or dwarfing a small room, they may be useful in giving a sense of space and of variety quite outside the power of one single paper, howsoever costly, to produce.

For furniture, there are a pedestal writing-table, of oak, not very dark, with some carving about it, and polished iron fittings of fine workmanship; a quaint couch with panelled boxed-in sides, also of oak, the panels elaborately carved in foliated Gothic ornament; a still more quaint arm-chair, the arms and back surmounted with grotesque carved heads, half animal, half human; an old oak chair "picked up;" with a Persian carpet or large rug of good coloring—yellow pine centre with dark blue border—thrown over the stained and polished floor: this much may be said of furniture; but indeed it does not matter much what furniture is put into this room, provided it is not of the debased modern brainless style. Anything old, quaint, and handy will do.

#### HOW TO BEGIN FURNISHING.

To achieve harmony in furnishing a room, the utmost care must be used; even the most experienced ornamentists have to give much thought in order to produce in form and color that sense of repose without which no arrangement can be truly artistic. Dr. Dresser gives some practical directions how to proceed to attain this result. Fix on one thing first, he says; and the best thing to fix on, as the starting-point, is that which it is most difficult to obtain in a number of good colorings—say, the window-hangings. These being fixed upon, the key-note of our composition is struck; now, with the hangings before you, and even resting on the carpet, consider whether the two not only look fairly well together, but whether or not they actually improve each other. Do not be afraid of placing two or three strips of carpet together before you settle; for the nearer the mass of color comes to that which will be seen upon the floor, as you have the whole curtains before you, the better. Try carpet after carpet till you get the right one; but if blue prevails in the hangings it need not, therefore, predominate in the carpet; indeed, it is not necessary that there be any blue in the carpet at all, for we are seeking to produce a harmony and not to get a monotone effect. Having the hangings and the carpet arranged, the color of the wall may be considered, for this can readily be made of any required tint; next settle on the treatment of the ceiling, for it must not remain white if all the parts of the room are to make one concordant whole, and go on in this way throughout, remembering that nothing can be brought into the room as a part of its furniture or decoration which is too insignificant for careful consideration.

As in choosing the first article of furniture for a room the key is struck for the entire decorative scheme, the first article selected (continues the writer) must be chosen with due regard to the requirements of the case. If a room looks out upon a lawn or noble trees, it is wrong to give to it a green tone, for by so doing the lawn and the trees will never appear to have that freshness which they otherwise bear, and they, in their turn, will react upon the room so as to destroy its pleasant effect. If the room has a cold aspect, "warm" colors should be used in its furnishing; and if it be much exposed to sunlight, then its treatment should be "cool." Thus the first article for the room must be selected with due regard to all such considerations as these.

#### STAINED AND POLISHED FLOORS.

WHILE among practical writers on decoration there are few advocates of the polished wooden floor which fashion has revived, a mere margin of wood has much to commend it, especially on the score of cleanliness. A carpet which covers the entire floor is the special harbinger of dust and disease. It cannot conveniently be taken up more than once or twice in the year, and the effect of a daily brushing is to redistribute, but not to remove, the noxious accumulations.

Mr. R. W. Edis, a well-known London authority on artistic furnishing, in a recent lecture before the Society of Arts, gave his opinion on the subject to this effect. He said the margin might either be painted, or

stained, or covered with parquet, but he declined to give his sanction to the so-called "carpet-parquet" (a kind of veneer much advertised in London) laid down over the flooring. If painted, it should be covered with several coats of some dark color. It is important that these successive coats should be uniformly dark, otherwise scratches upon the floor may show white; and care must be taken to allow each coat to harden. Parquet, Mr. Edis said, is more showy, perhaps, than painting or staining, but he was unprepared to say that it was more artistic. It is more expensive, of course, being somewhat costly in itself, and involving, besides, the cutting away of the flooring. A parquet or stained margin having been left, within this a carpet might be pinned down, which could easily be taken up as often as required.

A writer in *Scribner's Monthly* takes strong ground against painting the floor. He advises those who cannot afford to have inlaid or even single natural wood floors to have the pine boards planed and then stained and polished, and proceeds in the following practical way to tell how this may best be done:

"First, if your floor has been already painted, or is covered with drippings from the paint-brush, cover the spots and splashes with caustic potash; leave this on till the paint is dissolved. It will take, perhaps, thirty-six hours to do this if the paint is old and hard; then have the floor well scoured, taking care not to let the mixture deface your wash-boards.

"Secondly, if your flooring is marred by wide, ugly cracks between the planks, have them puttied, as they serve otherwise as a multitude of small dust-bins, and show an ugly stripe between your shining boards.

"If the planks are narrow and of equal width, you can have them stained alternately light and dark—oak and walnut. In that case, stain the whole floor oak, and then do the alternate stripes dark. The staining mixture can be bought at any paint-shop, or can be ordered from any city, and brought by express in sealed cans. In almost every case it is safe to dilute the staining mixture with an equal quantity of turpentine. I have never seen or used any which was not far too thick as it is bought. It helps very much, when staining in stripes, to lay two boards carefully on each side of the stripe to be stained, and then draw the brush between. This guards the plank from an accidental false stroke of your brush and saves time to the aching back. If, however, the dark staining should chance to run over on the light plank, before it dries wipe it off with a bit of flannel dipped in turpentine.

"When the floor is to be all walnut, the best staining I have ever seen is done without the use of a brush. Buy at a grocer's—for a single medium-sized room—a one-pound can of burnt umber, ground in oil. Mix with boiled linseed oil a sufficient amount of this to color properly without perceptibly thickening the oil; by trying the mixture upon a bit of wood till the desired color is attained, the quantity can easily be determined. It should be a rich walnut brown. Rub this into the wood thoroughly with a woollen cloth, rubbing it off with another woollen cloth till the stain ceases to come off. Never be beguiled into using boiled oil to keep the floor in order, for it is more like a varnish than an oil, and after the pores of the wood have once become filled, it lies on the surface, attracting and holding dust till it ruins the wood, and can only be removed by the use of caustic potash, sand-paper, or the plane. But this first, or any subsequent coloring of the floor, must be done as here directed.

"If you find, when the coloring matter dries, that it is not dark enough, rub on another coat. Do not be discouraged that your floors look dull and poor, for they only need a few weeks of proper care to be what you want.

"When the staining is done, prepare for the next day's waxing. Mix turpentine and yellow beeswax in the proportion of one gallon of turpentine to one pound of wax, shaved thin. Let the wax soak all night, or longer, in the turpentine before using; then rub it on with a woollen cloth. A few times of using this will make the floor gain a polish like that of an old-fashioned table-top. At first it must be done frequently, but beyond the smell of the turpentine, which soon passes off, and the trouble of applying, it has no disadvantage. When the wood finally becomes well polished, the wax need not be applied oftener than once a week, or even once a fortnight. The floor, in the mean time, can be dusted off by passing over it an old groom or hair floor-brush, with a piece of slightly moistened rag tied around it. Everything that falls upon it lies upon the surface,

as on that of varnished furniture. Nothing ever really soils it. It can, of course, be washed up, but never needs scrubbing."

For the floors of halls or passages, Mr. Edis, in the lecture above referred to, recommended the use of marble-mosaic, or marble-mosaic tiles. Linoleum or oil-cloth is bad, being so soon worn out, besides being obtainable only in patterns which are bad in color, in treatment, and design, and poor imitations at the best. It is not desirable to make our already narrow spaces seem narrower by the use of tiles too obtrusive in color or too elaborate in design. Marble-mosaic tiles are composed of chips of marble set in cement. These are inexpensive, and properly chosen have a good effect.

## Domestic Art Notes.

GLASS floorings are now being made in France, the upper surface moulded in diamonds.

CARVED wooden knife-boxes and salt boxes, of an old English style, are being made for the kitchen.

WILLOW-PATTERN cups and saucers printed in colors are being used largely in England for invitations to tea.

WHAT purports to be a Pompeian vein of design is setting in for certain pieces of metal furniture, such as lamps.

SETS of door furniture in Egyptian style—handle, bell-pull, knocker, and letter-plate—are being made for large houses in London.

THE London Pottery Gazette thinks it probable that "our grandmothers painted in ceramic colors, if not on plaques, at least on dinner-plates, under the tuition of the Brothers Bradley, of Pall Mall, who fired their productions in a kiln where the Reform Club now stands."

"MIGHT not something be done to relieve the unspeakable dreariness of illimitable stucco?" asks Mr. Edis, mourning over the dinginess of the buildings in London. He suggests that inlaid plaques or panels of marble would be suitable for exterior wall decoration; they are made brighter by every breeze, and in the rainfall they become brilliant.

PAINTED dresses are still in vogue on both sides of the Atlantic. An effective arrangement recently noticed in London was made by the front breadth of a Princesse-cut tea gown being painted in wisteria blossom, and another in jasmine. The painting in such work should never be thick with body colors; the shades should blend in to the color of the ground.

THE fashion of painting muslin for dresses is being revived. At the Social Guild Bazaar recently held at Nottingham, England, the room was arranged in the form of a street of the middle ages, the balcony enabling the spectators up-stairs to look down from the upper windows of the houses, while a mediæval castle appropriately occupied one end of the hall. As many of the fair stall-keepers were arrayed in the costumes of the period, the effect was striking and unique.

NOVICES should not attempt too much in the way of color. Harmonies in shades of one color are usually successful, especially in golden browns and reds. If all the colors are used together they harmonize each other, as we see in Indian and other polychrome work. Two or three colors require great circumspection to get them right, for all combinations depend very much on the shade and tone of each, and all presuppose a skill in coloring that is in part a gift, but in part also the result and reward of study and experience.

FERNS, well pressed and dried, and then painted thickly with liquid gold paint, are sometimes applied with good effect to the doors of a cabinet. One who has tried the experiment and succeeded says: "After gumming the backs, I arranged them on the panels of the door, pressing them with an old soft cloth. Where the gold paint moved off, I painted it again when dry. Lastly, I carefully laid on a wash of clear varnish, doing it as quickly as possible. This preserves the ferns and gilding, and improves their appearance."

A RECENT improved receipt for preserving plants with their natural colors is to dissolve 1 part of salicylic acid in 600 parts of alcohol, heat the solution up to boiling-point in an evaporating vessel, and draw the plants slowly through it. Shake them to get rid of any superfluous moisture, and then dry between sheets of blotting-paper, under pressure, in the ordinary manner. Too prolonged immersion discolours violet flowers, and in all cases the blotting-paper must be frequently renewed. The novelty appears to be the salicylic acid.